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SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR NEA/ELA
NSC FOR PASCUAL

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [KISL](#) [PTER](#) [KIRF](#) [SOCI](#) [SCUL](#) [PGOV](#) [EG](#)
SUBJECT: SALAFISM ON THE RISE IN EGYPT

CAIRO 00000202 001.2 OF 004 Classified By: DCM Matthew H. Tueller, for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

- 1.(C) Summary: Increasing religious conservatism, a trend in Egypt over the past two decades, is taking on a new dimension; over the past sever
- 2.(C) Strolling through Cairo and Alexandria's lower and middle-class neighborhoods, one cannot help but notice the proliferation of niqabs (fu
- 3.(C) There is consensus among a wide array of our contacts - politicians, academics, analysts, and "ordinary" Egyptians - that Salafism is on
- 4.(C) In addition to the regularly cited factors behind an overall increased piety among Egyptians - poverty, and the conservative influences t
- 5.(C) There are 10-12 Salafi-themed TV channels broadcasting from Egypt on Nilesat, most of which started-up since 2003. The most popular are #
- 6.(C) Analysts also point to Salafist charity work as another key factor in their growth. Taking a page out of the MB's playbook, Salafis have
- 7.(C) Perhaps one of the most potent factors in facilitating the spread of Salafism has been the GOE's largely passive approach to it. As one c
- 8.(C) Another expert on political Islam lamented the GOE's "huge mistake" in fighting the MB, "which espouses moderate Islam, political partici
- 9.(C) The MB-Salafi dynamic is far from warm, fueled by the inherent tension between the two movements' worldviews, with the MB embracing polit
- 10.(C) The different approaches of the two movements to the election of President Obama are a useful comparison of their two worldviews. MB Sug
- 11.(C) After years of largely looking the other way, parts of the GOE apparatus are slowly moving to address the Salafi wave. In December 2008,
- 12.(C) While the GOE is undertaking belated efforts to confront rising Salafist theology, the governmental religious establishment itself appea
- 13.(C) Egyptian political elites are uneasy about the rising resonance of Salafis with the population. Several analysts we spoke with are conce
- 14.(C) All we spoke with worried that burgeoning Salafism will make Egypt less tolerant and more sectarian. They fear an increase in anti-Chris